European voyagers discovered a new world in the Western Hemisphere and an all-sea route around Africa to India. Only a few years later their successors were knocking at the doors of China. It was, indeed, the lure of the land which Marco Polo's famous story had portrayed to successive generations of Europeans which drew some of the explorers. This was notably true of Columbus, who sailed westward in the belief that the world was smaller than it proved to be and that the east coast of Asia was about where America was found: the search for Cathay was in no small degree responsible for the discovery of the New World.

The first Europeans to arrive in China in this new day were, naturally, the Portuguese, for it was they who first rounded the Cape of Good Hope and gained a foothold in India. Malacca fell to their arms in IS 11, and there they found Chinese ships. A few years later, probably in 1514, they reached China and before long established themselves off the coast of Kwangtung and in ports in Fukien and Chekiang. Their early career in China was stormy. The Moslem ruler of Malacca whom they had dispossessed complained of them to the Chinese authorities, and a Portuguese envoy, Pires, who reached Peking in 1S20 was treated as a spy, was conveyed, by imperial order, to Canton, was there confined with several of his companions, and died in prison. A settlement which the Portuguese established near Ningpo was wiped out by a massacre (1545) and a similar fate overtook a trading colony in Fukien (1549). For a time they retained a precarious tenure only on islands south of Canton.

For this ill fortune the Portuguese had chiefly themselves to

thank. Truculent and lawless, regarding all Eastern peoples as legitimate prey, they were little if any better than the contemporary Japanese pirates who pillaged the Chinese coasts. The Ming authorities can scarcely be censured for treating them as freebooters.

Within a few years after these events—the exact date is not quite certain—the Portuguese succeeded in making a permanent settlement in China, at Macao, on a peninsula which commanded a harbor on an island south of Canton. Here they have remained to this day, although the harbor is too shallow for the great ocean-going steamers of recent years and the sleepy little town, a bit of